

Message Text

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22
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:WNHOWELL:PDW

APPROVED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER

NEA/P:EOJONES

S/S:LRMACFARLANE

P:POAKLEY (SUBS)

NEA:AEGRIFFIN

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O 160246Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 229195

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH "MONDAY MORNING"

REF: BEIRUT 7463

1. WHILE WE ARE SYMPATHETIC TO THE EMBASSY'S WISH TO BE
RESPONSIVE TO "MONDAY MORNING," WE BELIEVE EMBASSY SHOULD
CONTINUE TO REFRAIN FROM BEING DRAWN INTO "INTERVIEW"
FORMATS WITH LOCAL PRESS. FEELING HERE IS THAT UNUSUAL
CIRCUMSTANCES IN LEBANESE SITUATION MAKE IT ESSENTIAL
THAT STATEMENTS OF POLICY AND POLICY CLARIFICATIONS COME
FROM WASHINGTON EXCLUSIVELY, WITH EMBASSY PROVIDING QUOTES
BY SECRETARY OR PRESS SPOKESMAN TO INQUIRERS. FYI: WE ARE
PRESENTLY CONSIDERING A STATEMENT OF U.S. VIEWS WHICH
MIGHT BE ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH SARKIS' ASSUMPTION OF
THE PRESIDENCY AND MANY OF QUESTIONS FROM THIS PERIODICAL
MIGHT BE ADDRESSED IN POLICY STATEMENT. END FYI.

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2. THEREFORE, YOU SHOULD FIRMLY TURN OFF NAJIA'S REQUEST,

TELLING HIM IF NECESSARY THAT EMBASSY IS NOT AUTHORIZED TO PARTICIPATE IN QUESTION-AND-ANSWER INTERVIEW FORMATS. YOU COULD, HOWEVER, POINT OUT TO HIM THAT THE USG POSITION ON LEBANESE SITUATION IS UNUSUALLY FULL, AS NAJIA'S FREQUENT RE COURSE TO SECRETARY'S SEPTEMBER 11 PRESS CONFERENCE INDICATES. WE CERTAINLY HAVE NO OBJECTION TO HIS DRAWING UPON THIS CONSIDERABLE BODY OF MATERIAL WHICH, WE FEEL, PROVIDES ADEQUATE RESPONSES OVER MANY MONTHS TO MOST OF HIS QUERIES. ROBINSON

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